REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 6-17 are pending in this application. By this amendment, claims 6-17

have been amended to conform to the Patent Office's current requirements regarding

system claims. Further, claims 21 and 22 have been added as method claims.

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for his time in a brief telephone

interview on June 13, 2006, in which the Examiner further clarified the final rejection of

the claims. Claim 6 was discussed but no agreement was reached. In the interview, the

Examiner also indicated that the addition of method claims to the present application

would be acceptable based on the nature of the application and the fact that method

claims were previously cancelled without prejudice.

The Examiner has rejected claims 6-17 under 35 USC 103(a) as being

unpatentable over Dunphy et al.

Applicant submits that Dunphy describes a relational parts characterization

database 103 into which various information for parts can be input and then referred to

by a computer program in constructing part groups or the like. In particular, information

about each part is entered through a data entry tool 105 or through other interfaces 109,

such as test tools that provide other data relating to a part (see Col 3, lines 5-21). The

parts may then be further classified into part groups that are defined by a set of

identifying characteristics (see Col. 4, lines 54-64). The parts and part groups then rely

on a hierarchical tree structure to define the characteristics of the part or part group (see

Col. 5, line 53 to Col. 6, line 7 and Col. 6, lines 28-65 for part groups and Col. 8, lines

11-56 for parts). The tree structure allows each child node to inherit all the

characteristics of a parent node via an assigned pointer, without duplicating the data.

Dunphy then provides a publishing interface 107 that can be used to access the parts

characterization database to generate parts datasheets 117 (see Col. 3, lines 22-30)

that include part characteristics (Col. 10, lines 7-29).

Applicant submits that, at best, Dunphy contemplates a comparison of part group

characteristics with part characteristics to determine if a part can be considered a part of

a part group (see Col. 6, lines 8-25). Dunphy uses the tree structure as a way to

connect all of the characteristics of a part or of a part group to the part or part group, as

such, in performing the comparison, the tree structure is followed to identify all of the

characteristics of a part or part group (see Col. 5, line 53 to Col. 6, line 7 and Col. 6,

lines 28-65 for part groups and Col. 8, lines 11-56 for parts).

Applicant submits that Dunphy performs a search according to the standard

method of checking to see whether or not a part has a particular attribute. Dunphy does

not deal with the creation of new attributes or correspondence relations based on a

customer query or customer search keywords (which may not match with the recorded

attributes of a product) and the recording of new attributes of a product on the basis of

the customer query or search keywords. Further, Dunphy does not refer to these new

attributes and correspondence relations in another transaction.

As previously indicated, Dunphy describes a relation database structure including

pointers. As such, Applicant submits that Dunphy does not teach or suggest the use of

an appartus configured to perform a cellular decomposition operation or a cellular

attaching operation.

Applicant submits that none of the cited references (Durphy et al. or Durphy et al.

combined with Spiegel et al.) teach or suggest at least the feature of a correspondence

generating unit configured to: specify correspondence relations between search

keywords input by the customer and information (attributes) on merchandise presented

by a shop; determine if a correspondence relation is new; and record the new search

keyword and information as a new attribute, as generally claimed in claim 6.

Applicant further submits that none of the cited references (Durphy et al. or

Durphy et al. combined with Spiegel et al.) teach or suggest at least the feature of a

correspondence presenting unit configured to read out and present the correspondence

relations stored in the table at a stage of another transaction, as generally claimed in

claim 6.

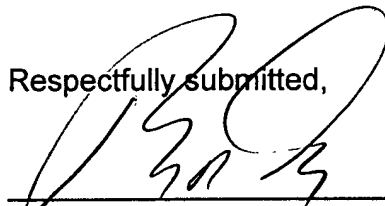Based on at least the foregoing arguments, Applicant submits that independent

claim 6 is in condition for allowance. New claim 21 represents a method that generally

corresponds to the system of claim 6 and claim 22 provides a reworded version of claim

21 more closely related to a specific embodiment. As such, for at least similar reasons

to those outlined above, Applicant submits that claims 21 and 22 are in condition for

allowance. Claims 7-17 depend from claim 6 and for similar reasons, as well as the

additional limitations therein, are also believed to be in condition for allowance.

Conclusion:

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks it is respectfully submitted that

this application is in condition for allowance. Favourable consideration and prompt

allowance are earnestly solicited. Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned

in order to arrange an interview if further discussion would advance this case to

allowance.

Respectfully submitted,

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